

MERCHANTVILLE SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES and NEWS

Minutes from the last meeting held at Boro Hall on July 18, 2016, and news since then.

Those present in June

Hollis Ryan, John Long, Kris Donohue, Joan Anderson, and Bob Paulson

Reading of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which appears on the Borough website. Meetings are usually held the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in Boro Hall in the room on the first floor west wing.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the June meeting were not disapproved.

Boro Report

Nothing new.

New Business

No meeting in August

Several people will be gone in August, so the meeting was cancelled. The next meeting will be September 19 starting at 5:30 pm so you can go outside with Hollis while it is still light to practice the online tree inventory.

Tree Inventory

From Hollis: Several years ago (2006, 2007, 2008) Krista Lee did a tree inventory for part of Merchantville (1210 trees). Bob converted her Excel spreadsheet into a spreadsheet matching the tree data descriptors used by the federal government's i-Tree computer format (2014). Last year I put this data into the i-Tree system. This year I am setting up for us the mobile capability to walk around town observing the status of the trees and collecting the data into a cellphone and then transferring the data into the Merchantville data base. There are 27 descriptors as listed in Table 1, p.26 of the User Manual. About half of the descriptors in the data base use numerical codes, 1, 2, 3, 4, Bob has defined these numerical codes for us to use. Bob's files define the descriptors and their numerical codes, and a list of the 27 descriptors in the actual i-Trees data base.

From Hollis July 16:

I have now set up for us to use, (1) a webform for collecting Merchantville tree data, and (2) a pilot data base which will store the tree data we collect. We shall learn and practice the skills necessary to collect the tree data using this pilot data base. When we are proficient in the data collection, we can switch to the regular data base.

We are planning to use our smart phones to collect the tree data. However any web enabled device may be used such as a tablet or a home computer. We can do most of our familiarization on our home computers.

I am planning on giving a chalk talk on the Streets part of i-Tree, with some tutorial handouts, followed by a demonstration. You will then practice doing the data collection using the pilot data base.

To get started using the data collection tools read the email from i-Tree. The email is in the gmail account name merchantvillenj.trees.pilot@gmail.com. The email has a link (a URL, i.e. http://...) to the i-Tree website which, when you click on it, will download to your smart phone the Merchantville webform which you then will fill out. The password for this email account is !%Tree235.

To support our use of the i-Tree Streets' tools there is a 70 page manual and 10 video tutorials put up on their website last fall.

I shall forward to you the above mentioned email to help you recognize it in the new account. Below is the link for your data collection of the project 'Merchantvillenj_Pilot':

<http://itreetools.org/streets/mobile/?key=MERCHANTVIZ578A81FBZ52562Z199ED6D7E>

July 18: at the next meeting in September starting early at 5:30 pm, Hollis will take you outside to practice using the online inventory on smart phones or lablets. You will use the practice version of the tree inventory before beginning to update the heritage inventory.

Old contracted tree work

Hyperion began removal of 5 trees from the MSTC Removal list, completing much of the work while still leaving huge logs and totem poles. John will not authorize their payment until the work is completed.

Additional contracted tree work

John is going out for quotes for removal of 5 additional trees from the MSTC Removal list. Also, he is going out for quotes for trimming from the MSTC Trim list with a cap of \$3000.

Weekly list of tree maintenance issues to vote on

The group voted to have tree issues requiring a vote to be put out in a single email before the weekend with responses from everyone who can by Tuesday. It has been done twice, and seems to work.

What to do about residents who remove or damage street trees without permission

For instance, removal of a tree at 218 Springfield by Sam Slattery, or 14 Browning Rd by Jesse Bunting.

Tree Maintenance Open Issues:

- Community Center tree near the baseball field – removed by Hyperion? Were any of these trees the two listed for removal in the Community Center tree maintenance list?

Watering planted trees

We would like DPW to use the MSTC water tank to water trees that have been planted last year and this year. Bob created a list of planted trees from 2014 to the present. In the short term, MSTC members can water trees from the list in 2015 and 2016. Nothing new.

CSIP sidewalk grant

There are 120 sidewalk citations. Some properties have multiple citations. All were issued at the same time to give residents equal opportunity to apply for a sidewalk grant, as it is unlikely the grant will cover all the work. Under the grant, the State provides \$20,000 and the Boro provides \$5000. Residents hire their own contractor and are reimbursed up to 60% of their cost. Because sidewalks are required to be 4' wide and not curve onto lawns, otherwise healthy trees must be removed. The grant is being administered by Bill Watson, Code Enforcement, under the supervision of Dan Sperrazza, Boro Council. Work is proceeding. Some tree roots are being heavily cut. For instance, as reported by Kerry on Plymouth Place. There will be meetings.

DPW Tree Work

They removed all the trees on the DPW Removal list except for the tree at 130 Greenleigh Ct.

Roy was afraid he would damage a fence. It was moved to the MSTC Removal list.

They also trimmed all the trees on the DPW Trim list except for the first tree from Maple Ave on the east side of Prospect, as a car was parked there, and the trees at 113 Woodbine. For the later, the trees to be trimmed are the first and third of 3 trees. However, the trees are large London Planes, and perhaps DPW can't really trim them?

Stump Grinding

Roy is now adding stumps as trees are removed and removing stumps as they are ground. There are currently 20 stumps remaining on the list, plus various totem poles.

Roy was not removing totem poles until more stump removal could be done because he thinks totem poles are less of a tripping hazard than stumps. Some of the totem poles probably cannot be removed by DPW. DPW is budgetted to get a stump grinder, so will be grinding the stumps themselves. Nothing new.

PSE&G tree work for us

Their chief looked at the PSE&G Removal list, and told Roy only one of the trees was in primary electric wires, so they would not work on the others. Roy will ask which tree. They also will look at the PSE&G Trim list. Nothing new.

Old Business

Tree Maintenance Decisions, trees affected by sidewalk repair

- 33 Volan – resident Christopher Wood wants to repair his sidewalk himself. MSTC looked, voted to give him permission. He was contacted, asked to be kind to the tree roots.
- 23 West End – 2 Sweetgums – MSTC voted to leave the trees
- 21 Alexander - MSTC voted to leave the tree
- 12 Poplar – MSTC voted to have the tree removed by Hyperion

Tree Maintenance Decisions, Work Done

- 111 Poplar – 6' totem pole – it was added to the Stump/Totem pole list
- 7 Clifton – tree in wires, needs hard cutback. It was added to the PSE&G Trim list
- 10 Poplar – Kerry noted Cherry tree in wires requiring cutback – it was added to the PSE&G Trim list
- 203 Springfield – resident Yvonne Chen was concerned about the two large London Plane street trees dropping branches. There are wires. MSTC looked, decided there is nothing wrong with them. She was informed.
- 114 Glenwood - Roy Adair reported branches over wires. It was added to the PES&G Trim list.
- 154 Prospect on Locust – Roy Adair reported branches causing low hanging wires. It was added to the PSE&G Trim list.
- 28 Franklin – reported by Roy Adair: tree was hit by a truck. A broken branch fell, but another broken branch needs to be removed. No wires. It was added to the MSTC Trim list.
- 128 Springfield – Roy Adair reports a dead tree, no wires, DPW can't remove it – it was added to the MSTC Removal list
- 15 E Walnut – sidewalk work, contractor thinks the tree could be compromised; no wires; remove the tree? MSTC voted to keep the tree, and approve the sidewalk work.
- 105 E Cedar on Gilmore (in triangle with Cove, Gilmore, and E Cedar) – no wires, tree with hanging branch. It was added to the MSTC Trim list.
- 101 W Maple on Morris – Roy Adair reports 2 dead trees; no wires; they were added to the MSTC Removal list.
- 110 Lexington via Agnes Madden – Hollis reports London Plane with two trunks, one of which is dead, drops branches, knocks out house wires, could take out electrical wires if it falls across the street; it was added to the PSE&G Trim list with priority.
- Bike path opposite 1 Linden – dead tree in vines – it was added to the Bike Path list for removal.
- Bike path opposite 500 W Chestnut – mostly dead tree in vines – it was added to the Bike Path list for removal.

MSTC Boro email and voicemail

The MSTC email is accessed at <http://webmail.merchantvillenj.gov/>. The user name is shadetree@merchantvillenj.gov, and the password is blackoak.

The MSTC voicemail is extension 373 at the Boro main mail phone number (856) 662-2474. We voted to have Denise Brouse remove this extension, as no one was answering it.

Memorial Tree Report

The Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund had \$1338.38 as of 5/17/16. This fund contains Shade Tree donations, and can only be used to purchase trees and memorial plaques.

We have ordered plaques from William V. Sipple & Son in Milford DE ((800) 673-9041). They charge \$150 for a plaque (no more than 3 lines, no more than 21 characters per line including spaces). We charge \$200 for a plaque. For memorial trees, we charge the cost to buy and plant the tree.

Kris indicated that she would like a memorial plaque.

Kris is also looking for a cheaper and/or closer plaque vendor.

MSTC Budget

Budget Committed includes money spent and money we owe as of 5/17/16. Budget Approved is the budget allocated by the Boro. Only the totals are important. The 2016 approved budget is \$15,000.

The Memorial Trust fund is separate.

MSTC Fund*	2015 Budget			2016 Budget		
	Committed	Approved	Remaining	Committed	Approved	Remaining
Tree and Stump Removal, Tree Trimming	\$9500 ^d	\$10,000	\$500	\$7750 ^a	\$13,000	\$5250
Purchasing and Planting New Trees	\$3870 ^e	\$1000	-\$2870	\$219 ^b	\$1000	\$781
Training and Miscellaneous	\$520 ^f	\$1000	\$480	\$85 ^c	\$1000	\$915
Total	\$13,890	\$12,000	-\$1890	\$ 8054	\$15,000	\$ 6946

*not including Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund

^e2015 Fernbrook Nursery order of 12 trees \$2200

^f2015 NJ Shade Tree Federation dues \$95

^f2015 Arbor Day Foundation dues \$35

^d2015 Hyperion removals (113 Woodbine: \$800; Wellwood trunk \$550) \$1350

^e2015 Elite Landscaping to plant 12 trees \$1670

^d2015 Weldon hanging branch removal \$150

^d2015 Garden State stump grinding \$2000

^d2015 Hyperion removals (9 trees) \$3000 _open, not yet paid

^d2015 CC Tree Expert trimming \$3000 paid

^f 2015 NJ STF meeting attendance – 2 people for 2 days \$390 paid

^a2016 Hyperion removal (1 additional) - \$450

^a 2016 CC Tree Experts trimming (22.8 hours) - \$5700

^a2016 Hyperion removal of 5 trees \$1600

^b 2016 Home Depot – purchase 2 trees \$219

^c2016 Arbor Day Foundation dues \$35

^c 2016 Core training Kris \$50

Next Meeting after July 18: September 19, 2016 (third Monday) 7 pm in Boro Hall. The August meeting was cancelled.

Respectfully submitted by: Bob Paulson